



February 2010
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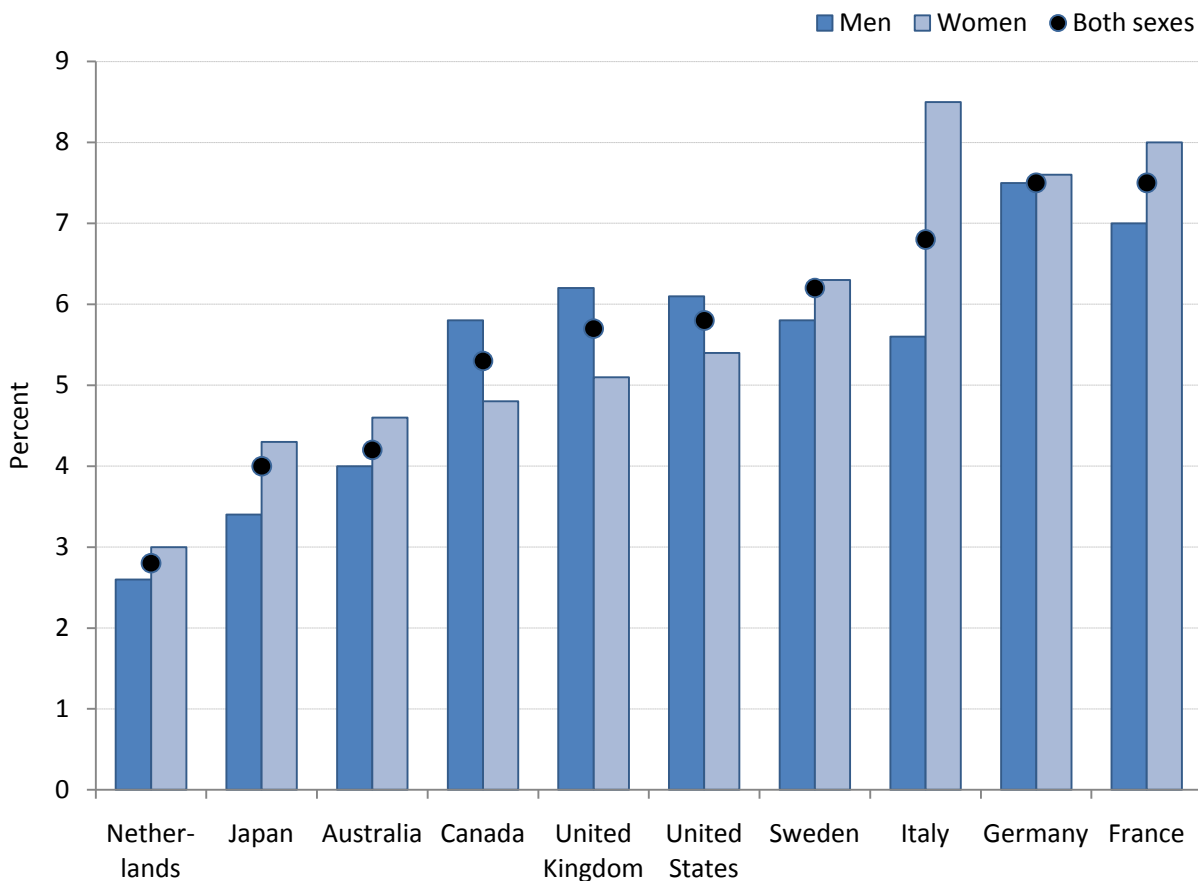
Charting International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics, 2008

Division of International Labor Comparisons

These charts present comparative trends of unemployment, employment, labor force, and population for 10 countries. The data have been adjusted for comparability. All data are based on *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics, Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, available on the Division of International Labor Comparisons Web site at www.bls.gov/fls/flscomparelf.htm.

Unemployment rates by sex, 2008

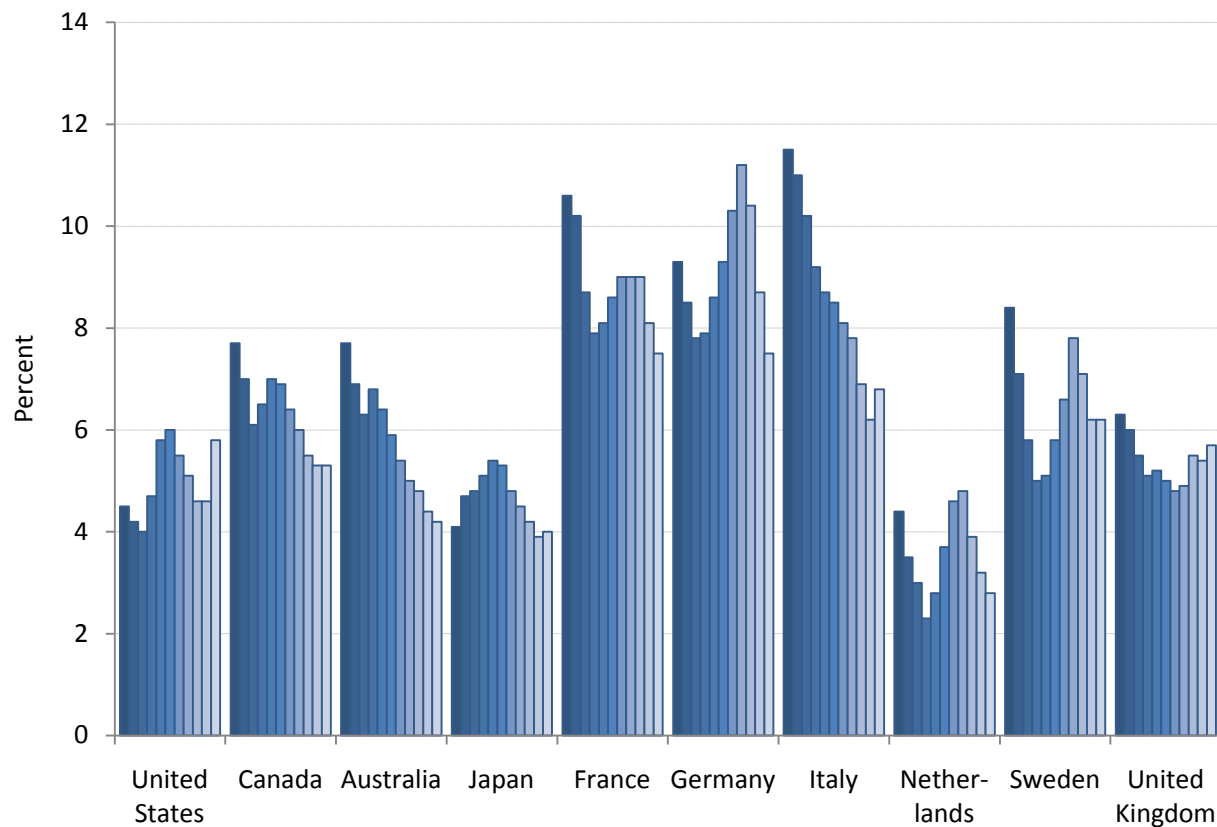
Women's unemployment rates were higher than men's in all countries except the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Italy had, by far, the largest gender gap (2.9 percentage points).



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 1-2](#), [Table 1-3](#), and [Table 1-4](#).

Unemployment rates, 1998-2008

Unemployment rates declined over the period in all countries except the United States. However, four of the 10 countries – the United States, Japan, Italy, and the United Kingdom – experienced increases in their unemployment rates from 2007 to 2008.

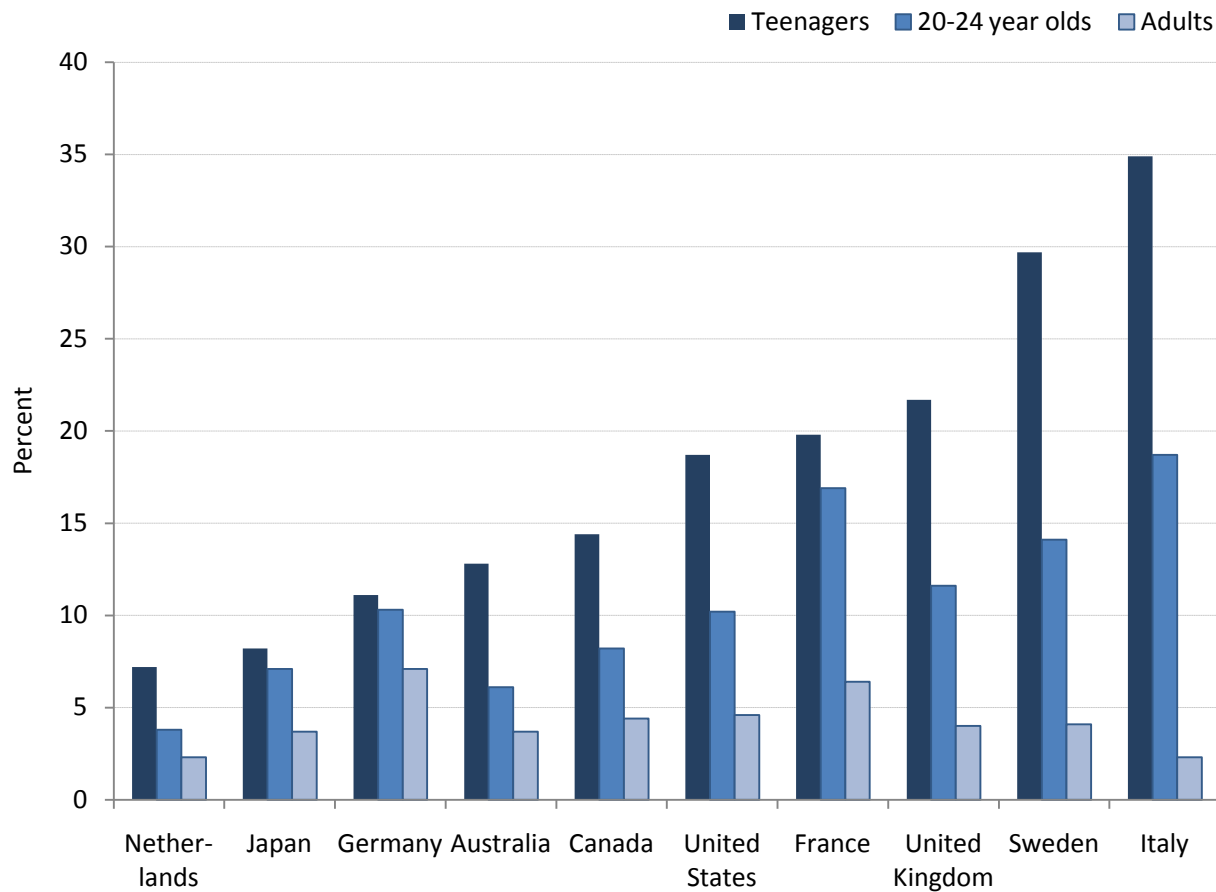


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 1-2](#).

For 2009 monthly unemployment rates, see [International Unemployment Rates and Employment Indexes, Seasonally Adjusted, 2007-2009](#).

Youth and adult unemployment rates, 2008

Teenagers' unemployment rates are typically two to three times the adult rates. Young adults, ages 20-24, had lower unemployment rates than teenagers in all countries. Italy and Sweden had the largest gaps between youth and adult unemployment rates.

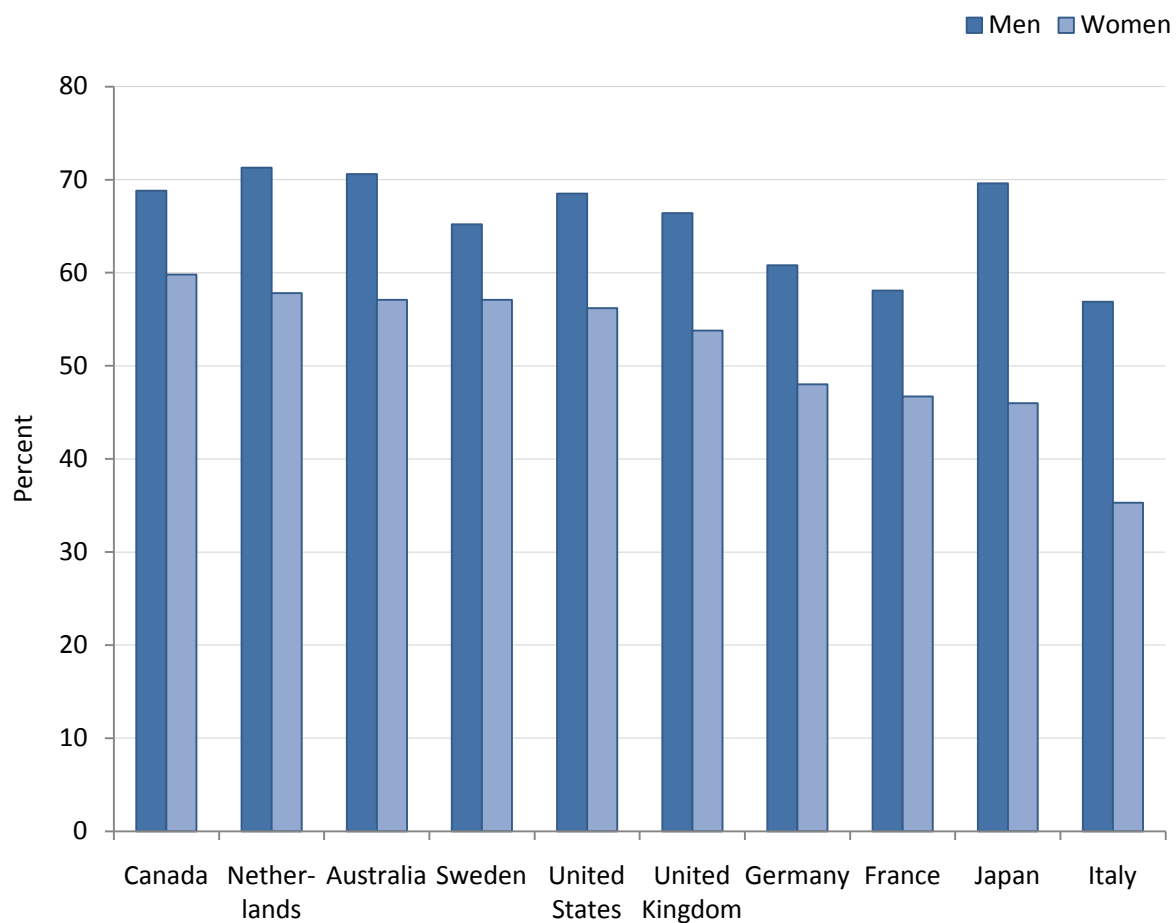


Note: Teenagers are defined as persons ages 16-19 in the United States, Canada, France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom and as persons ages 15-19 in Australia, Japan, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. Youths are defined as persons ages 15 or 16-24, and adults as persons ages 25 and older.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 1-5](#), [Table 1-7](#), and [Table 1-8](#).

Employment-population ratios by sex, 2008

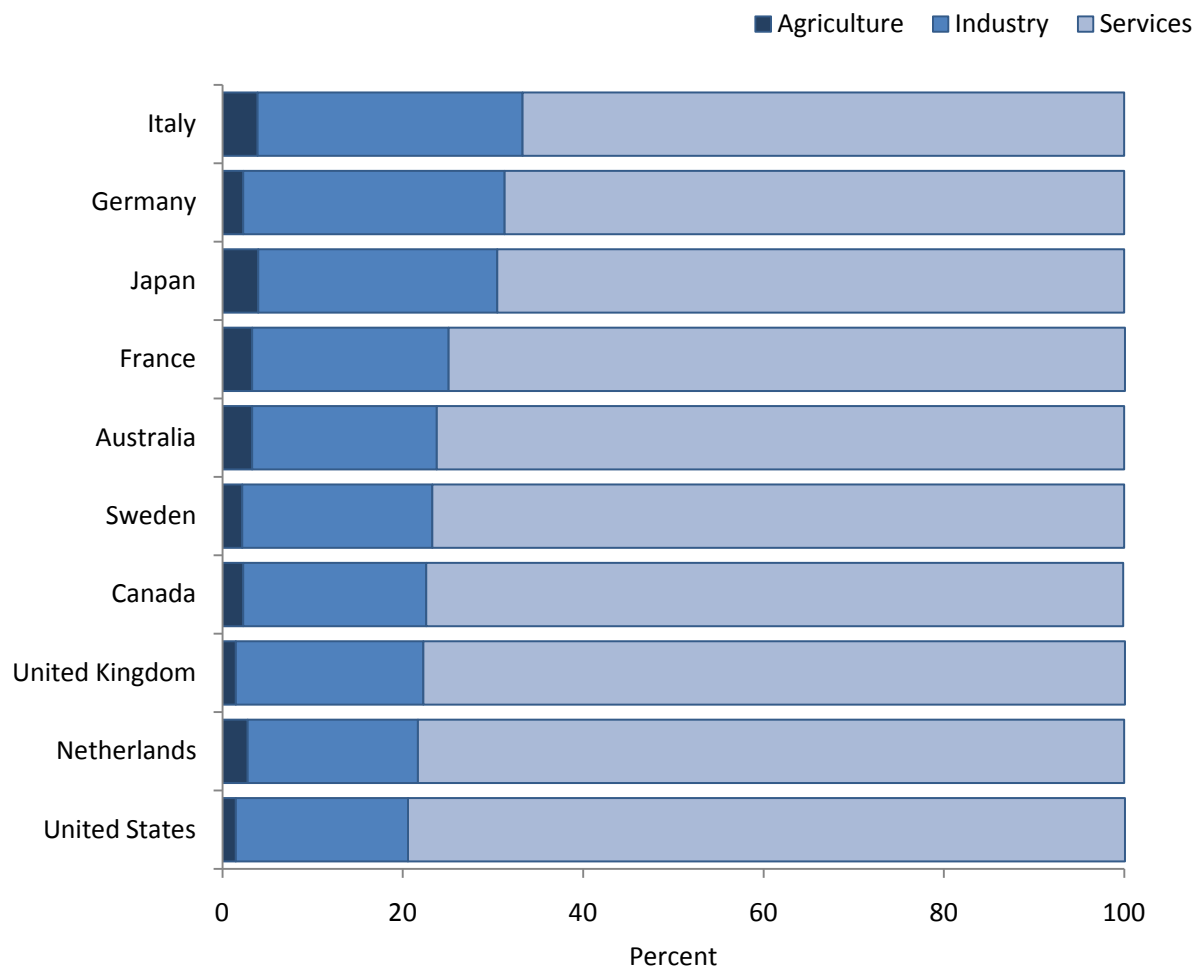
Employment-population ratios were higher for men than for women in all countries. The largest gender gap was in Japan (23.6 percentage points) while the smallest gap was in Sweden (8.1 percentage points). Of all employment-population ratios for women, Canada's was the highest. Employment-population ratios for women in the Netherlands, Australia, and Sweden were close to the ratio for American women.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 2-11](#) and [Table 2-12](#).

Employment by sector, 2008

At least 2 out of every 3 workers were employed in the services sector for all countries. The share of employment in industry was lowest in the Netherlands and the United States, at approximately 19 percent each.

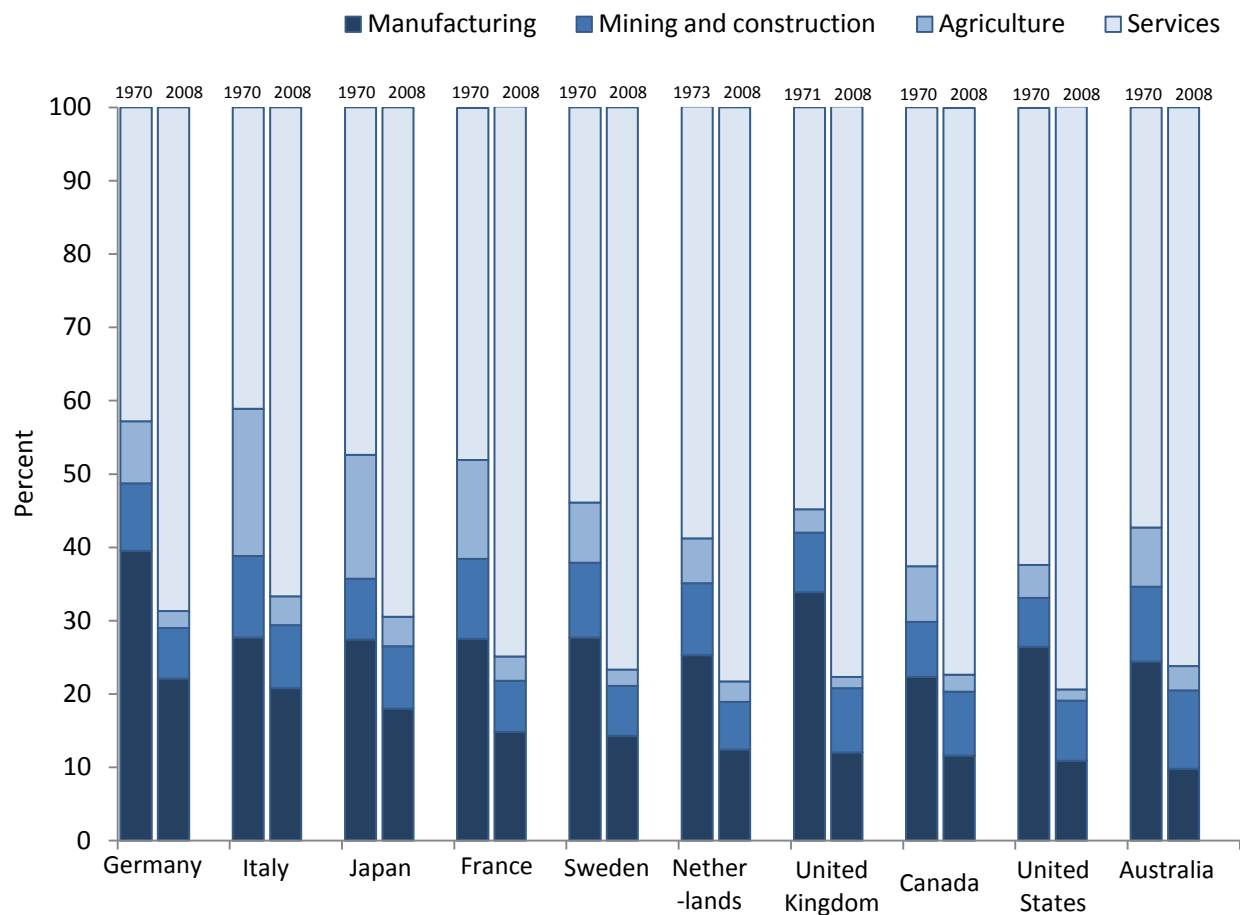


Note: The category "industry" includes manufacturing, mining and construction.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 2-6](#), [Table 2-7](#), and [Table 2-9](#).

Employment by sector, 1970 and 2008

Most countries saw a redistribution of employment share away from manufacturing, agriculture, and other industry and into services. Manufacturing's share of employment decreased most over the period in the United Kingdom (21.9 percentage points).

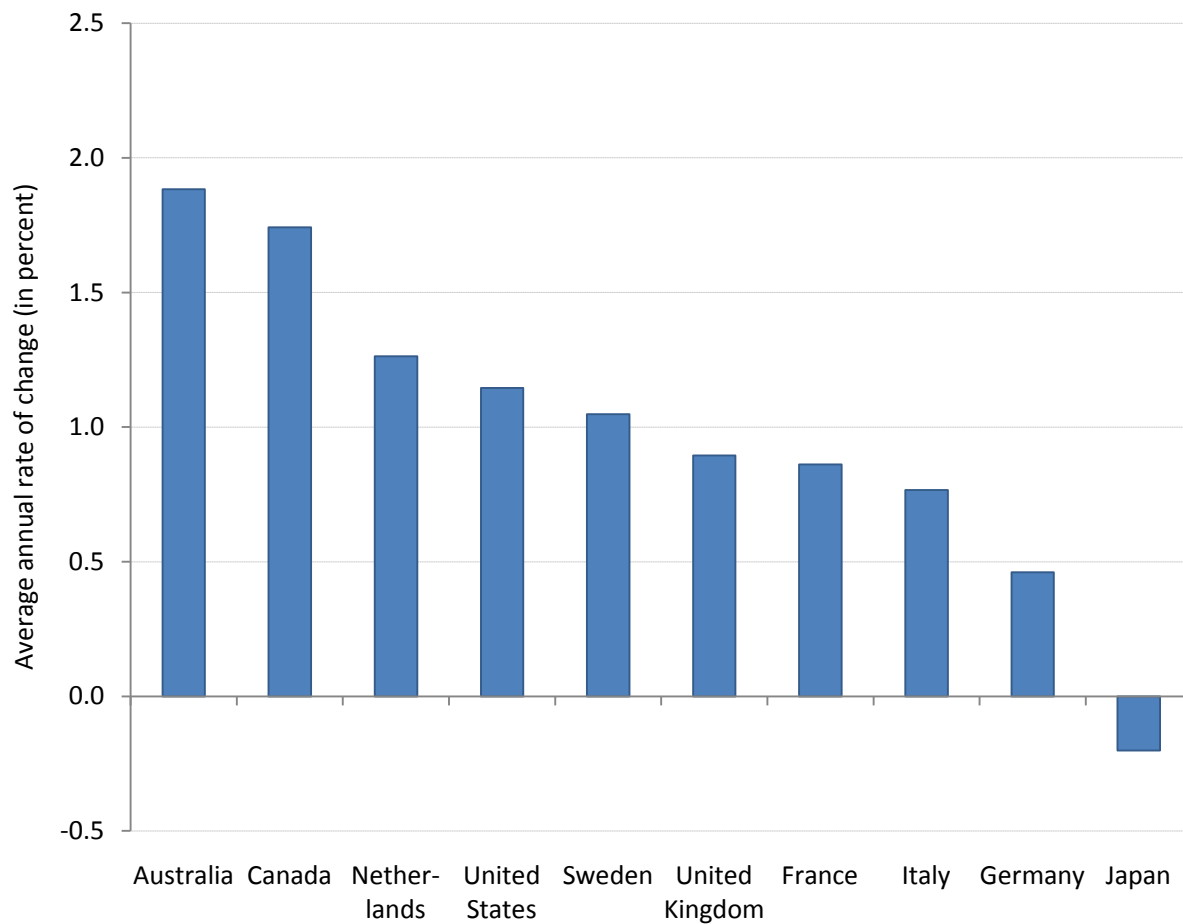


Note: The categories "manufacturing" and "mining and construction" sum to "industry."

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 2-6](#), [Table 2-7](#), [Table 2-8](#), and [Table 2-9](#).

Average annual growth rates for the labor force, 1998-2008

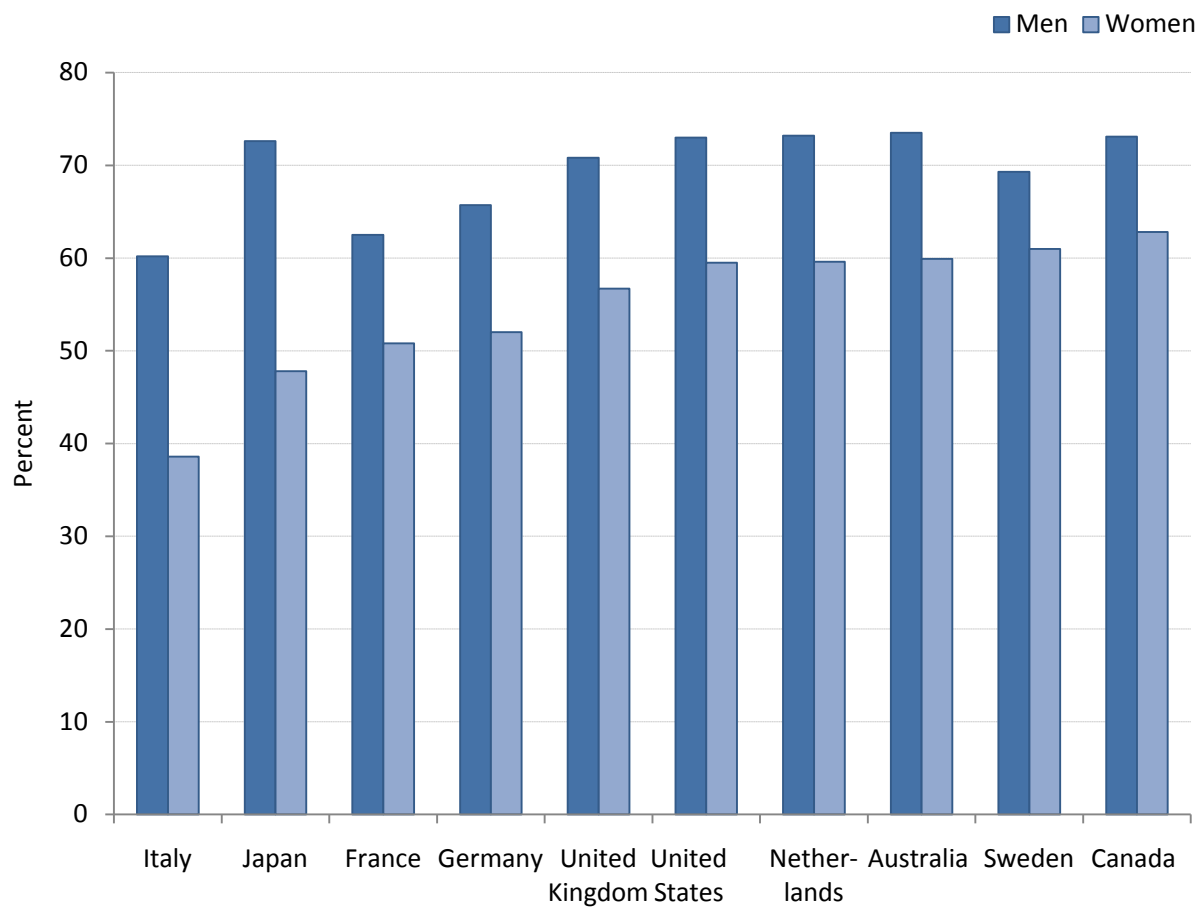
Labor force growth rates were highest in Australia and Canada. The labor force declined only in Japan.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 3-1](#).

Labor force participation rates by sex, 2008

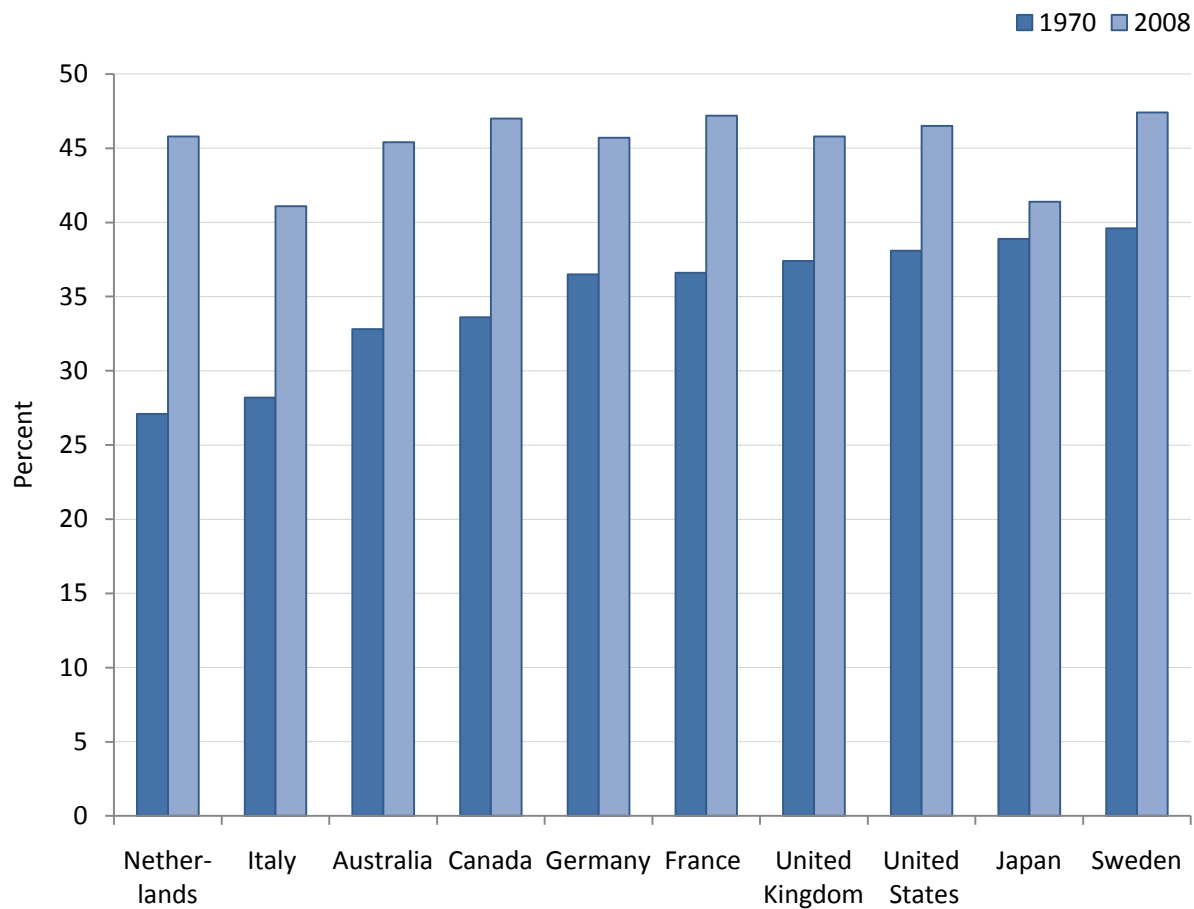
Participation rates for men were higher than rates for women in all countries. The largest gender gaps were in Japan (24.8 percentage points) and Italy (21.6 percentage points). Of all labor force participation rates for women, Canada's was the highest. In the Netherlands, Australia, and Sweden, women participated in the labor force at about the same rate as U.S. women.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 3-4](#) and [Table 3-5](#).

Women's share of the labor force, 1970 and 2008

Women's share of the labor force increased in all countries over the period. The largest increase was in the Netherlands (18.7 percentage points) and the smallest increase was in Japan (2.5 percentage points). Women's share of the labor force varied much less across countries in 2008 than in 1970.

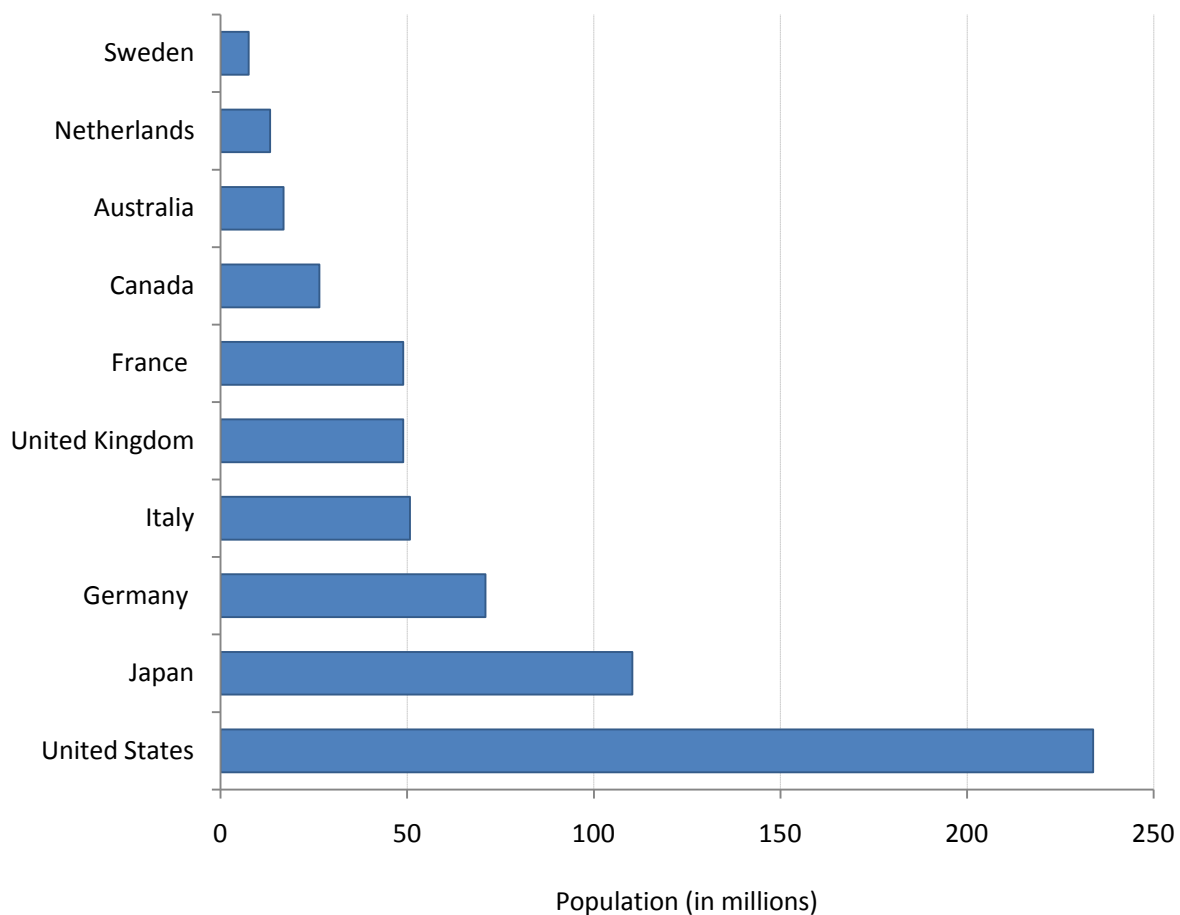


Note: 1971 for the United Kingdom and 1973 for the Netherlands, rather than 1970.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 3-2](#).

Working-age population, 2008

The United States had the largest working-age population, at approximately 234 million. The size of the working-age population in the United States is about 5 times that of the United Kingdom and more than 31 times that of Sweden.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Labor Comparisons, *International Comparisons of Annual Labor Force Statistics Adjusted to U.S. Concepts, 10 Countries, 1970-2008*, [Table 4-1](#).